

**Remarks**

The Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of Claims 8 – 12 and 14 – 16.

The Applicants also note with appreciation that Claims 2 and 7 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112. Claim 7 has been rewritten into independent form by including the subject matter of Claim 1. Confirmation of allowance of Claim 7 is respectfully requested. Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of Claim 2. Claim 2 has been cancelled.

The Applicants acknowledge the rejection of Claims 3 – 6, 13 and 17 – 20 under 35 U.S.C. §112. The Applicants do not believe that those claims are inconsistent with the claim from which they depend, namely Claim 1, inasmuch as Claim 1 recites that a composition “comprising” a number of components, those components including incidental impurities and a balance of iron. The subject matter of the rejected claims surely adds to the composition. However, the composition is stated as “comprising”, which is an open form allowing for additional components. Such addition merely changes the balance of iron since iron is the largest component. In other words, “the balance” is a variable quantity depending on the number and amount of other components that form the composition.

Although the Applicants do not believe it is necessary, the Applicants have amended Claims 1, 8 and 10 to remove reference to iron and the incidental impurities. Therefore, Claims 3 – 6, 13 and 17 – 20 are not inconsistent. Of course, those of ordinary skill in the art fully understand that the remaining portion of the composition that is not specifically set forth in Claims 1, 8 and 10 is the usual balance being iron and whatever incidental impurities might be contained therein. Withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 3 – 6, 13 and 17 – 20 is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 12 and the Applicants respectfully submit that it is now in condition for allowance. Claim 12 has accordingly been cancelled. Claim 15 has been amended to depend from Claim 10.

The Applicants have added new Claims 22 – 34. New Claims 22 – 26 are the same Claims 2 – 6, respectively, except that they depend on Claim 7. Similarly, new Claims 27 – 31 are the same as Claims 13 and 17 – 20, respectively, except that they depend on Claim 10. New Claim 32 is the same as originally filed Claim 1 except that it recites a “hot rolled” stainless steel. The Applicants respectfully submit that, inasmuch as Taruya teaches a cold rolled stainless steel sheet, it is not applicable to the hot rolled stainless steel sheet of Claim 32.

The Applicants acknowledge the rejection of Claims 1, 4, 5 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Taruya. In view of the amendment of Claim 1, wherein the subject matter of Claim 2 is incorporated into Claim 1, the Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot. Withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire Application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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